

Midlothian ISD  
District of Innovation Plan  
2017-2018 through 2021-2022

# Midlothian Independent School District District of Innovation Plan

## **INTRODUCTION**

A District of Innovation (DOI) is a concept passed by the 84th Texas Legislature that gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to open enrollment charter schools, including exemption from many requirements mandated in the Texas Education Code. To create a DOI, a school district must adopt an innovation plan for its district. On August 15, 2016, the Board of Trustees hosted a public hearing to gather public comments on Midlothian ISD becoming a District of Innovation, a product of House Bill 1842 from the 84th Legislative Session.

The School Board appointed a District of Innovation Committee comprised of community members, appointed by the School Board, parents, teacher leaders, and campus, as well as district, administrators. The primary goal of this committee is to prepare a District of Innovation plan to address the needs of the District.

## **TERM**

The MISD District of Innovation Plan will be implemented beginning with the 2017-2018 school year and end on June 30, 2022. The District of Innovation Committee will review the plan annually to verify that elements in the plan are still compatible with district needs. Any changes will be posted online for 30 days and will require approval of the Innovation Committee, DEIC, and the School Board.

## **MISSION**

The mission of Midlothian ISD is to educate students by empowering them to maximize their potential.

## **VISION**

Midlothian ISD. . .Inspiring excellence today to change the world tomorrow

**Midlothian Independent School District  
District of Innovation Plan**

**GOALS**

**Teaching and Learning**

1. Transform our classroom to be truly student-centered through aligned teaching and learning.
  - 1.1 Design and develop aligned K-12 curriculum.
  - 1.2 Facilitate problem solving, critical thinking and risk-taking for staff and students.
  - 1.3 Provide and support professional development in the implementation of a K-12 aligned curriculum.

**Human Capital**

2. Design a comprehensive staffing plan to foster excellence, high expectations, and positive morale throughout the district.
  - 2.1 Develop and execute a high level recruitment plan.
  - 2.2 Identify and provide support systems needed to retain quality staff.

**Funding and Finance**

3. Resources will be optimized for all stakeholders, according to the Strategic Plan, to enhance and maximize student potential.
  - 3.1 Educate the community regarding school finance and its restrictions.
  - 3.2 Collaborate with stakeholders and community partners to meet the needs of the district.

**Facilities**

4. Provide facilities that create an innovative learning environment using district resources in the most efficient manner.
  - 4.1 Develop criteria to be used in the design of future construction and renovation projects.
  - 4.2 Develop a comprehensive facilities plan to guide financial decisions related to future site acquisitions, new construction, and renovation of existing facilities.

**Technology**

5. Design a system to provide for the evolving digital needs of MISD.
  - 5.1 Develop a plan to ensure appropriate network infrastructure for anticipated future needs.
  - 5.2 Create a process to enable digital access for all future devices/programs for MISD.

**Communications/Community Partnerships**

6. Create an environment of transparent information exchange between the school district and key stakeholders that builds long-term impactful relationships.
  - 6.1 Establish a support system for addressing district needs in order to obtain community resources.
  - 6.2 Develop a communications strategy that effectively communicates successes, strengths, and opportunities of the district.

**Midlothian Independent School District  
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<b>District of Innovation: Committee Members</b>	
Dr. Lane Ledbetter	Superintendent of Schools
Judy Walling	Deputy Superintendent
KayLynn Day	Assistant Superintendent HR & Student Services
Jim Norris	Assistant Superintendent Finance & Operations
Brian Blackwell	Secondary Principal
Courtney Carpenter	Elementary Principal
Shannon West	Elementary Principal
Shannon Thompson	Elementary Principal
Jessica Trezza	Elementary Assistant Principal
Melonie Bagby	High School Classroom Teacher
Elizabeth Strange	Middle School Classroom Teacher
Tracy Xavier	Elementary Classroom Teacher
Erin Roberts	Elementary Classroom Teacher
Shari Dawson	Elementary Classroom Teacher
Rhonda Byler	Elementary Classroom Teacher
Becky Wiginton	Elementary Counselor
Dave Scott	Community Business Leader

**Midlothian Independent School District  
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**Goal 1: Class Size**

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**1-1. Area of Suggested Exemption (Focus): 1st through 4th Grade Only**

- TEC Code Requiring Exemption:
  - **25.112** - Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.
  - **25.113** -A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section [25.112\(d\)](#) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception.
- Local Guidelines:
  - EEB Legal
- Benefit of the Exemption for Midlothian ISD
  - This exemption will allow Midlothian ISD the ability to group students based on academic, social and emotional needs without additional waivers.
  - Being exempt from 22:1 class size ratio will prevent the relocation of students to another attendance zone and allow them to remain with the same teacher and classmates that they began the school year with, allowing continuous stability and support for the student.
- District Procedures
  - Kindergarten will remain at 22:1.
  - If class size is to exceed 22:1 there will be a 30-day consideration period to determine 23:1. The following categories will be reviewed:
    - Grade / subject of classroom
    - Dynamics of campus and classroom
    - Availability of space and resources
    - Hiring of additional staff
    - Effects of campus relocation

**Midlothian Independent School District  
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**Goal 2: Instructional Calendar**

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**2-1. Area of Suggested Exemption (Focus)**

- TEC Code Requiring Exemption:
  - Sec. 25.0811 FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.
  
- Local Guidelines:
  - EB (Local) - No change necessary
  
- Benefit of the Exemption for Midlothian ISD
  - This exemption will allow balance between the two semesters to coincide with the natural occurring winter break.
  - By beginning the school year one week earlier, semester exams would be able to occur prior to winter break, in turn giving additional time in the second semester for STAAR/EOC/AP preparation and testing.
  - This exemption would allow the flexibility for the district calendar to be aligned with the local college semester and assist with coordinating dual credit courses.
  - Instructional calendar flexibility will allow more opportunities for staff development before and during the school year.
  - Calendar flexibility will allow time to organize vertical alignment, the integration of one-to-one and the restructure of lesson design.
  
- District Procedures
  - **Midlothian ISD may begin instruction before the 4th Monday in August thereby providing additional days for Professional Development during the school year.\***

*\*District of Innovation amended on December 4, 2017*

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**Goal 3: Employee Appraisal**

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**3-1. Area of Suggested Exemption (Focus)**

- TEC Code Requiring Exemption:
  - Sec. 21.352. LOCAL ROLE. In appraising teachers, each school district shall use:
    - (1) the appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner; or
    - (2) an appraisal process and performance criteria: (c) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, appraisal must be done at least once during each school year.
  - Sec. 21.354. APPRAISAL OF CERTAIN ADMINISTRATORS. The commissioner shall adopt a recommended appraisal process and criteria on which to appraise the performance of various classifications of school administrators. The criteria must be based on job-related performance.
  - Sec. 21.3541. APPRAISAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM FOR PRINCIPALS. (a) The commissioner by rule shall establish and shall administer a comprehensive appraisal and professional development system for principals.
  
- Local Guidelines:
  - DN, DNA, DNB
  
- Benefit of the Exemption for Midlothian ISD
  - Flexibility with the Employee Appraisal system will allow for a more customized approach for non-core faculty and staff.
  - Exemption from the Employee Appraisal system will provide flexibility to the Principal and Administration to conduct evaluations at the appropriate frequency for each staff member.
  - More specific evaluation measures will provide a more individualized learning plan for employees.
  
- District Procedures
  - Midlothian ISD will create appraisal instruments specific to non-core faculty and staff.
  - Student growth measures will be identified and developed locally.
  - The frequency of evaluations will be determined locally by Principal and/or Administration.

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**Goal 4: Teacher Certification**

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**4-1. Area of Suggested Exemption (Focus)**

- TEC Code Requiring Exemption:
  - Sec. 21.003. CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.
  
- Local Guidelines:
  - DBA
  
- Benefit of the Exemption for Midlothian ISD
  - Being exempt from a certification requirement would allow our district to secure highly qualified individuals in hard to fill positions. Students would benefit from industry-certified individuals in Career and Technical Education courses such as Registered Nurses, Engineers, Veterinarians, etc.
  - MISD would be given more flexibility for hiring staff and scheduling courses for our students.
  - This exemption would aid high school students in personalizing graduation plans and earning endorsements.
  
- District Procedures
  - Locally developed guidelines will determine qualification of individuals who are not certified.
  - Continuing education will be provided to these individuals to enhance knowledge of pedagogical practices.
  - Special Education and Bilingual teachers in the district will continue to be SBEC certified.



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**Goal 5: 90% Attendance Rule**

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**5-1. Area of Suggested Exemption (Focus)**

- TEC Code Requiring Exemption:
  - Sec. 25.092. MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE. (a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.
  
- Local Guidelines:
  - FEC, EI
  
- Benefit of the Exemption for Midlothian ISD
  - Exemption to the 90% Rule will provide flexibility for students who:
    - are unable to attend class in the traditional learning facilities because of illness or family concerns.
    - would benefit from a different time structure than that of the typical school day.
    - would benefit from virtual and online classes either in addition or in lieu of the traditional classroom setting.
    - are pursuing an accelerated learning program such as music or swimming and require extensive travel.
  - Exemption to the 90 % Rule will reduce the number of dropouts and increase the number of qualifying graduates.
  
- District Procedures
  - MISD will research and implement innovative methods, locations, and times for instruction thereby offering students more flexibility and opportunity, such as
    - online coursework
    - outside of school hours
    - project-based learning experiences
    - internships

# Midlothian Independent School District District of Innovation Plan

## Timeline of Events

- April 18, 2016 -adopted resolution
- August 15, 2016 - Board of Trustees hosted a public hearing
- November 7, 2016 - Dr. Stewart presented an overview of the DOI process to DEIC
- February 21, 2017 - First DOI Committee Meeting
- February 27, 2017 - Second DOI Committee Meeting
- March 10, 2017 - First day of 30 day web posting
- March 24, 2017 - Plan sent to Commissioner of Education
- April 12, 2017 - Dr. Stewart presented the DOI Plan to DEIC
- April 17, 2017 - Plan presented to Board of Trustees for approval
- April 18, 2017 - Official District of Innovation Plan posted to website